

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Abstract of the Disclosure with the following (A separate sheet showing the Abstract in clean form is also attached):

--A device is provided that is capable of being mounted on both sides of an injured joint to immobilize the joint, ~~typically as a means of providing emergency care to a patient. The inventive device has plates that are pivotally attached to each other so that the device can be placed against the patient's body and secured to body parts that are on opposing sides of the injured joint, without substantially moving the injured joint. In this manner, additional trauma, pain and/or injury to the patient is avoided or minimized while emergency care is being provided. According to one aspect of the invention, the~~ The apparatus has a first plate adapted for engaging a limb of the body, and a second plate adapted for engaging a body part to which the limb is connected via the injured joint. The first plate has a first end portion, and the second plate has a second end portion. The apparatus also has a lockable joint connecting the first end portion of the first plate and the second end portion of the second plate. The apparatus also has a support mechanism extending between a back surface of the first plate and a back surface of the second plate, for maintaining the first plate in a fixed position relative to the second plate.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Referring back to Figure 1, both plates 110, 120 may be the same size or different sizes. According to one embodiment of the invention, the top plate 110 is approximately 10 inches wide and 10 inches long. To immobilize a shoulder injury, this plate 110 may be used to rest a patient's arm on. The upper-arm (humerus) on the tricep and elbow side may rest on this plate. Alternatively, for example, if a knee injury is to be immobilized, this plate 110 could support the lower-leg, or tibia and fibula, and be placed on the posterior side of the leg. In one embodiment of the invention, the bottom plate 120 is also approximately 10 inches wide and 10 inches wide. Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the size and dimensions of the plates may vary according to the intended uses of the device. For example, biomedical and biomechanical data may be helpful in considering the particular materials and

dimensions of an injury immobilization device so that the device is capable of supporting the weight of a human limb. Such types of data are widely available in publications such as, for instance, "Geometrical and Mass-inertial Characteristics of the Upper Human Limb," published by the Centre of Biomedical Engineering, Bulgarian Academy of Science, as part of the Motco Data Project, and available on the Internet at <http://www.meteo.dir.bg/Data/MassInertial.html>, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Figure 2 illustrates a similar frontal view of the two plates 110, 120, and shows one possible position 140 of the plates with respect to each other. The plates 110, 120 may mold to the contours of a patient's body. In Figure 2 the plates 110, 120 are positioned so a shoulder may be immobilized at approximately 90 degrees. The joint 130 may be locked in place. The plates 110, 120 may fit the general contours of a patient's arm and lateral upper-body. Flexible and rigid properties of these plates may be based on a variety of different materials or combinations thereof, such as, for example, natural or synthetic fibers, fiberglass, carbon fiber, polycarbonate alloys, polymers, or moldable metals and foams. The plates 110, 120 may remain rigid in the lengthwise direction 150 while in the width-wise direction 160 the plates may be molded into a semi-cylindrical or concave shape 170 that is adapted to engage the curved portion of a body part such as an upper arm, side of a torso, thigh or leg. In the width-wise direction 160, plate 110 or 120 may be flexible or rigid. Metal or plastic strips (not shown) may also be provided as stiffening members secured in the lengthwise or crosswise direction (150 or 160, respectively) to maintain rigidity of the plates, particularly when the plates are made of a lightweight material that is not substantially rigid when used to support a heavy weight such as an arm or leg. Plate 110 and/or 120 may also be formed of multiple, rigid, parallel strips (not shown) that are flexibly connected together with a flexible material such as a textile, plastic or other synthetic material, so that in the width-wise direction 160 plate 110 or 120 may be brought into close proximity to the curved portion of the body on which the device is to be secured. Alternatively, multiple, flexible plate segments may be joined together with rigid connections in order to form plates 110 and/or 120. Plate 110 or 120

may also be formed of a flexible material which includes one or more rigid supports in the lengthwise direction. If a plate is flexible, means are provided to ensure that the plate can be secured to the body part without falling off inadvertently, as described in further detail according to the description of Figure 6[[*et seq*]].--